

JOLIET JUNIOR COLLEGE

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

DONALD C. LANG

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Interviewers

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May 18
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May 18 1976
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INTERVIEWEE: Donald Lang

INTERVIEWER: John Lapikas

INTERVIEWER: This is an interview with Donald Lang for the Joliet Junior College Oral History Class. The interviewer is John Lapikas. The interview took place May 18, 1976, at 3:30 o'clock at 2105 Mayfield Avenue in Joliet.

LAPIKAS: Mr. Lang, could you maybe begin with your early family life--maybe your parents and early home life?

LANG: I was born in Joliet, Illinois on August the 14, 1893, on the east side of Joliet not far from Hickory Creek. During the earlier times I went through several floods in that area.

LAPIKAS: Now your parents were born in Joliet?

LANG: No, my father was born in Frankfort, Illinois and my mother in New York State in the city of Westford. Came west on the Erie Canal and then from Chicago down here.

LAPIKAS: What can you remember about your early home life as, say, a young boy growing up?

LANG: I played baseball. And for family life. . . I had six brothers and one sister.

LAPIKAS: Did you live on a farm?

LANG: No, we lived in the city of Joliet.

LAPIKAS: I gues you're talking probably about 1910. Of course,

you were probably young then--about seventeen years old then.

LANG: Let's see, I went to school before 1900 at the old Richards Street School. It is now Washington School.

LAPIKAS: Is that the same building?

LANG: No, that was torn down--that old school.

LAPIKAS: Did you go to high school?

LANG: Yes, I went through Joliet Township High School.

LAPIKAS: Now that building is original, right?

LANG: Part of that is original. The part that faces on Jefferson Street. That was the front then. My father was in the Civil War. My brother was in the Spanish American War. I can remember going down to the then Abbot Building when he returned home from the Spanish war. A brother and I were in the First World War. And we have one boy who was in the last war--World War II.

LAPIKAS: Can you remember your father ever discussing the Civil War with you?

LANG: Yes, because he gave quite a few talks on the Civil War. A lot of fellows would go to the schools and give a talk. . . with a couple old cronies that were also in the Civil War. My father was injured in Atlanta, Georgia in the Civil War on July 2, 1864. My wife and I were going to Florida and we stopped at Chattanooga and we inquired about it. We were given

an address in Washington to write to get this information on my father's injury. Now he was with the 100th Illinois Infantry.

LAPIKAS: Did your father ever mention meeting or seeing Lincoln or Grant? I imagine he probably did.

LANG: He probably did because he was in politics. He was City Clerk a while and a probate clerk, too. I think Lincoln was in town once somewhere up on the west side. But I could never say that I could remember that he saw him.

LAPIKAS: Could you tell us a little about newspapers and stores and about things of that nature when you were a boy? Country stores, I suppose.

LANG: The grocery stores then weren't A&P and that thing then. I can remember going up Second Avenue and bringing groceries home for my mother. There was the JOLIET NEWS at the corner of Ottawa and Van Buren Streets. It's now torn down . . . near Barrett's there. I worked for a fellow by the name of McOwen who ran the book store. I worked in there for a while.

LAPIKAS: Was that the only Joliet paper at the time?

LANG: No, the JOLIET REPUBLICAN was across from the old Rock Island Depot. They've torn down the building on Washington Street. It's now a parking lot there on Washington Street. And then there was the NEWS like I said. Then for some time I worked in advertising for the JOLIET HERALD when they were next to the

old fire barn that is torn down on Ottawa Street. It is now the parking lot for the National Bank on Chicago Street, on Ottawa Street next to the barber shop across from St. Mary's.

LAPIKAS: How many people would you say were in Joliet at about that time? Do you have any idea what the population was?

LANG: I think it was up around 25 or 30,000. The steel mill was here. The wire mill was here. The wire mill was in Rockdale. The steel mill was up where the wire mill is now on Collins Street.

LAPIKAS: That was probably the main industry of Joliet then?

LANG: Yes. And there used to be a lot of quarries here. I can remember the quarries out on Rowell Avenue being worked. The men were down there drilling to get the limestone out.

LAPIKAS: How was the mail handled?

LANG: He would start out from the main post office and then go out Cass Street and deliver the mail.

MRS. LANG: Was the post office where it is now?

LANG: Well, yes, as long as I can remember. No, sometime it was on Ottawa Street, I believe, for a while and then they built this one and then they built an addition to this one.

LAPIKAS: Maybe we'll get into a little history of the downtown area. You worked downtown?

LANG: I was downtown a lot of the time. I passed papers. I passed THE REPUBLICAN and I worked at the HERALD a while-- THE JOLIET HERALD--in advertising. I had a paper route that started with the REPUBLICAN and went out to Washington Street, Eastern Avenue, First, Second and Richards Streets toward home. I lived on Mississippi Avenue.

LAPIKAS: That was when you were a young boy?

LANG: Yes.

LAPIKAS: And then later on what was your profession?

LANG: I worked at the courthouse a while. I was a probate clerk.

LAPIKAS: Is that the present-day courthouse?

LANG: No, it was the old courthouse. And the office was in the southwest corner on the first floor and the probate judge's office was across the hall on the northwest side.

LAPIKAS: This is across from the old Boston Store?

LANG: Yes. I worked there and I was probate clerk for three terms for twelve years.

LAPIKAS: Let's talk about local politicians like the mayor. Who was the first mayor that you can remember of Joliet? Or did Joliet always have a mayor?

LANG: Yes, as long as I can remember they had a mayor.

LAPIKAS: Who was the first that you can remember?

LANG: I think Richard Barr was mayor at one time. And I think Cronin and Hennesey toward the later years. Hennesey wasn't mayor too long ago. Hennesey's father was police chief. I wasn't in city politics much.

LAPIKAS: You were at Peoples (Savings & Loan), right? When did that take place in element of time to . . . that was after you came out of the service?

LANG: Yes, I was probate clerk up to '55 and then I retired. I worked at the wire mill in Rockdale for a while. I worked a lot of jobs. I worked for A. C. Johnson Lumber Company out on Linden Avenue for two, three years. That was after I retired as probate clerk. I was vice-president of Peoples Savings & Loan at the demise of Ben Stevens became president.

LAPIKAS: Which buildings that were there now are still there? How was town situated? Was it pretty much like it is now? Probably not; it's been enlarged quite a bit.

LANG: Elevation came along and changed the downtown around the courthouse somewhat. The Rock Island Railroad used to run at an angle through the courthouse yard. The jail was across from the courthouse. That's a parking lot now. The buildings that were on Chicago and Jefferson have been torn down. The Morris Building is new since then. I can remember when Brother Joe came back after the Spanish war that the reception was in that

old building. I think it was the Allen Building.

MRS. LANG: What's still here that was here when you were young?

LAPIKAS: We got the courthouse. That was there.

LANG: The old building on the corner of Washington and Ottawa Streets--Peoples Savings and Loan--was there. It's still there.

LAPIKAS: Electrolux used to be on the corner there, wasn't it?

LANG: Upstairs, I think. Yes, that's right.

LAPIKAS: Were any of the banks there that are there now?

LANG: No, the Will County Bank was where the Union National is. And then the bank failure came along. All of the banks closed except the First National. There was the Joliet Trust and Savings in the Barber Building next to the Princess Theater. That closed. The Will County closed. The Joliet National where the shoe store is, kiddy corner from Walgreens, was in there. And that went under. So the First National Bank was the only bank that was solvent.

MRS. LANG: Is that the original bank there now?

LANG: Well, the old building has been renovated and now has a new addition.

MRS. LANG: Are they the same sites?

LANG: They're the same location. The bank on Chicago Street is the same location as the old one but then that's new and

the addition in the back is new. The HERALD NEWS was originally over by the No. 1 Fire Barn on Ottawa Street. It moved to Scott and Van Buren Streets. Can you remember a fire barn there?

LAPIKAS: Yes, I can remember that.

MRS. LANG: There was a hotel there at one time, too, wasn't there?

LANG: Yes, there was a hotel. The JOLIET NEWS was a red brick building on the corner of Van Buren and Ottawa Streets next to where Barrett's and the Chamber of Commerce are now.

MRS. LANG: You used to talk about a building where the Fannie May used to be. It used to be a dance hall up there or something. That's the same old building.

LANG: No, that's new. There was a fire in that one and then that was torn down and this is a new building. There was a theater there--the Crystal Stairs with the water running down under the glass stairs. There was a theater in that building. Way back there was a pool room in the basement and there was a roller skating rink on the upper floor.

LAPIKAS: Was the Rialto Building there?

LANG: The Rialto Building wasn't there, no. There was the Joliet Dry Goods Store. Then there was a house in back of the Rialto Building across from the Catholic Church on Scott Street--

St. Anthony's. Bill Hise lived in that house. That was across from the church then.

LAPIKAS: Were there a lot of houses?

LANG: There were a lot of houses on Scott Street at that time. There were houses there where the parking building of the Joliet Federal is.

LAPIKAS: As long as we're in this time period, let's talk a little bit about prohibition. Do you remember prohibition in Joliet? Without mentioning any names if you don't want to.

MRS. LANG: He used to tell me about saloons they had here.

LANG: Sure. All right, I can remember prohibition. When I passed papers for the REPUBLICAN I would come out and down the alley and the first was a saloon right at the alley in the back of the Union National Bank. Then down the street was a tavern. I left a paper there. There was one saloon on Jefferson Street across from the courthouse about where Chuck's building is there, the dentist, Chuck Lang. There was a saloon there. There were two saloons on Chicago Street. Faulkner had one up on Chicago Street. I can remember that. One of the Faulkners, Faulkner's father, Bill Faulkner.

MRS. LANG: Isn't that where you said they used to serve sandwiches and stuff like that?

LANG: He served sandwiches. There was one in back of the Elks Building which is now torn down. The Elks was on Chicago Street.

And back of that was a tavern where they used to serve sandwiches. There was a tavern in there where the eyeglass place is on Van Buren Street. They called them saloons in those days.

LAPIKAS: Did they have to close down during prohibition? I imagine they did.

LANG: Yes, they were out of business then.

LAPIKAS: It wasn't illegal to drink it; it was illegal to manufacture it, I think, and transport it.

LANG: Or sell it--they couldn't get it. The big breweries closed down. Let's see, over on Collins Street was the big Citizen's Brewery. Sehrings was up on Scott Street there. Citizen's was over on Collins Street and that went down. They didn't make it. Then they started getting hard liquor in by, you know, across Canada.

LAPIKAS: But you could get a drink, right, even during prohibition if you wanted one? You knew where to go. Not you in particular I don't mean necessarily.

LANG: Yes, you could find them. If you went up to the Elks, you could get a drink. Sure you could. I belonged to the Elks on Chicago Street and I belonged for a while when they were up in their last building.

LAPIKAS: Do you want to talk a little bit about the depression?

LANG: No, not much, John, because it didn't affect me. I was

in the courthouse and I had a job and it was about the same thing as I'd been working at and paid and all that. It didn't affect me too much really.

LAPIKAS: Locally, though, everyone was hit pretty hard. Most everyone I mean.

LANG: I'd say tradesmen it affected a lot because they didn't build houses and they didn't make things. Stores, some of them had a tough time, I guess. I can't remember that it was a hardship.

LAPIKAS: Of course, inflation and prices were affected quite a bit.

LANG: The prices went down on things you could get.

LAPIKAS: Could you maybe talk a little bit about World War I? You say you served in it.

LANG: I didn't get across . . . my brother Howard got over to Europe. I didn't. I went to Jefferson Barracks in St. Louis and from there to El Paso, Texas in the cavalry. The First World War didn't last as long as the Second World War. We weren't in it too long.

LAPIKAS: Did you notice many changes when you came back?

LANG: No, I didn't notice many changes. I can remember a fellow I bummed around with and he was some relation. When there was a riot at the prison the Dandy First (army regiment) parked at Dellwood Park and I can remember those fellows. Alvin

Leonard enlisted in the Dandy First and quite a few of the Joliet fellows are veterans. A dozen or so I think were in the Dandy First. They eventually went to France and I can remember Alvin coming back. He'd been shot and a fellow by the name of Olhaver right along beside him was killed. You'd go to legion meetings and things like that. It wasn't as tough as the second one (war) because there weren't as many fellows lost.

LAPIKAS: During the Second World War, you were working where?

LANG: I was working in the courthouse.

LAPIKAS: You were in the courthouse still? Can you tell us anything about the effects of the war then. You could probably see more changes in the surroundings of the people especially after the Second World War. More people, I think, were affected than during the first war.

LANG: Yes, it affected more because in the second war then my son went in the Navy. Oh, that's another story. He was going to high school and he was graduating and along came the war and he wasn't too old, but he wanted to go. So he goes to the Navy and he joins up. Graduation time came and he was in the Navy so I had to go to the high school and one other fellow whose son was in the service and I got their diplomas for graduation from high school.

LAPIKAS: They were gone?

LANG: They were gone--two of them.

LAPIKAS: Can you remember rationing?

LANG: Yes, I can remember rationing.

LAPIKAS: Could you tell us what it was that was rationed?
What items were rationed and how did you go about getting them?

LANG: Well, I don't remember real well. Sugar and, I think, meat.

LAPIKAS: Probably coffee, I would imagine.

LANG: Yes. I don't know. It doesn't stick in my mind much.
The wife probably had her troubles getting various items. Like nowadays it's the same thing.

LAPIKAS: I can remember the ration books. I'd like to talk a little bit about changes in transportation from when you were a boy. Of course, you've probably seen quite a change.

LANG: I can remember the streetcars--electric streetcars. I can remember where they were kept down on Osgood Avenue which is by South Chicago Street--down that way in the car barn. I can remember riding on them to Dellwood Park when the streetcar company ran the park. I can remember riding to Chicago on the electric line. I can remember when the streetcars started to quit, slack off. The buses came.

LAPIKAS: You said a train came into Joliet. Did that come in or was that always here that you can remember, say 1910?

LANG: They always came in. I can remember prior to the Union

Depot down there that's there now the Alton had one where the First National Bank parking lot is--the drive-in on Scott and Jefferson. And the Rock Island depot was down on Ottawa Street and Washington--the suburban train. You'd go into Chicago on the Alton.

LAPIKAS: Then you've seen quite a bit of change in planes, too, I'd imagine. Do you remember the first time you ever flew on a plane?

LANG: I can't remember because I never have. I've never been on a plane in my life.

LAPIKAS: Do you remember horse and buggy or was that before your time?

LANG: Horse and buggies I can remember.

LAPIKAS: Did you have telephones?

LANG: Yes, we had telephones.

LAPIKAS: Indoor plumbing?

LANG: I can remember outdoor plumbing, too.

LAPIKAS: I imagine that there must have been a drastic change in morals and the life styles. How was it in, say, 1920?

LANG: I think there has been a change, yes. I notice the young people are different. I don't think we were bad boys back then or did a lot of the damage they do nowadays. I don't think so.

MRS. LANG: I was about 21 or 22 at that time and then when I was old enough . . . you never thought much of it. I went with Bill's parents . . . that was before we were married. It was a speakeasy. It was a home and, of course, things were open then. We all flocked over there and you should have seen all the people come in.

LANG: This is Chicago she's talking about now.

LAPIKAS: What did you do as a young man when you were courting in Joliet? Where did you go? What could you do? Or even with the guys?

LANG: I played ball down on Richards Street. I played baseball. I went skating on the creek. There was a dam at Richards Street on Hickory Creek and we could skate. I skated from Richards Street up Hickory Creek to New Lenox . . . a little walking around where there were a lot of rocks and it wasn't frozen, but you could make it to New Lenox skating. You could go roller skating. There was a roller skating rink downtown.

MRS. LANG: Did you ever go dancing?

LANG: We went to dances.

LAPIKAS: Where were the dances?

LANG: The Masonic Temple had a nice dance floor. Dellwood Park had a nice dance floor in the park. They used to have band music out at West Park back in those days.

LAPIKAS: You mentioned before to me that you heard William Jennings Bryan speak or that you knew he came to town once?

LANG: In memory now I believe I saw him. I saw at least one of the presidential candidates that came down and talked at the old Alton Depot on Jefferson near Scott. And I think it was Bryan. I'm pretty sure.

LAPIKAS: When was that? 1920's probably. Maybe you can tell me a little bit more about Dellwood Park. I know my parents speak of that once in a while.

LANG: There was a ball field and a stadium there. They used to have at one time a minor league ball club and they played ball in Dellwood. They had a scenic railway in Dellwood that ran. . . they had a dam there and they had a lake backed up and the scenic went down one side and it crossed and went up. I can remember that. They had a band concert and band shell at Dellwood Park. They had other things; you know, parks have amusements--popcorn, etc.

LAPIKAS: Was baseball a big sport when you were in school?

LANG: Yes, but there was football at the schools. It was no professional football.

LAPIKAS: Do you remember the professional baseball teams then? Did you ever see Ruth?

LANG: No, but I'd been to Cubs games and I've been to Sox games in Chicago. I don't know who played with Joliet team, but I saw

them. Johnny Lux, who was editor of the Herald, reported ball games from Dellwood when they were in the league. I can remember that. And I've seen games there.

LAPIKAS: Was Joliet organized socially for the teenagers? You see a lot of times now they're trying to get dances started at the various parks and things. Did they have that for the teens of Joliet then? I think you said West Park had . . .

LANG: Well, they had skating there, but they didn't have teams. The kids would go down and play sports in the park near Richards Street but on their own. There wasn't anybody supervising them like they do nowadays, no.

LAPIKAS: Was Highland Park . . . did they have things going on there?

LANG: Yes, but I don't remember . . . they had skating, yes, but they didn't have the facilities to buy hot coffee or refreshments that they have nowadays. You'd just go out there and skate.

LAPIKAS: Could you tell us a little bit about the early automobile?

LANG: John Olsen bought a Ford and that was about 1919. And he gets in it with no instruction, see. You push this lever, you push that for the old Fords, you know. No driver's license then.

MRS. LANG: They didn't need one.

LANG: And he comes downtown and parks around the old courthouse square there and we get a ride. Didn't bump into anybody.

(LAUGHTER) The first car that we ever had or that I ever had was a Dodge from Winston Motor Company up North Chicago Street and Jackson Street. Sears is in that building now. That's the first car I ever had.

LAPIKAS: That was 19-- . . .

LANG: Around 1920 or '21. We'd gotten back from the service. By the way, Johnny and I go away to the service together and we go down to Jefferson Barracks and I go to Texas and John goes to Siberia. Vladivostok. Well, he goes to the coast first and from there then they sent him over there. So that's how much we stayed together in the army.

LAPIKAS: Gas stations as such then? They probably started popping up a little bit then.

LANG: Yes, there were a few of them. Where did I get gas? I can't remember now. Over on Second Avenue--Richards Street and Second Avenue. I can remember that gas station--a Texas station. I can remember a Standard station--getting it there. Yes, they had a few--not the number nowadays. The thing was just starting out.

LAPIKAS: How about an idea of prices; of course, that's probably more of a woman's idea, but do you remember anything about like food prices--what a certain item cost back in 1920. Like a loaf of bread, do you remember?

LANG: Yes, I lived on Mississippi and Third Avenue back in the time when every spring there was a flood. I can remember in the living room that it was a foot up over the carpet. I can remember when Hickory Creek went over with the ice going out. There was a bridge at Richards Street--an arch bridge and it would always jam up there and then it would back up and the creek would overflow. Then we lived near Washington St. in an apartment. We lived on Washington Street and Arizona Avenue. We lived on Whitley Avenue and Third Avenue.

MRS. LANG: Where did you live when you were a small boy?

LANG: Mississippi Avenue till 1925.

LAPIKAS: Did you ever swim in the creek?

LANG: Yes, I swam in the creek. It was clean then.

LAPIKAS: I've heard oldtimers say that the canal was clean years and years ago--like you could almost see through it.

LANG: Yes. The creek you could see the bottom. There were fish in the creek back in those days. Then they started emptying sewers into the creek. But the winters were different in those days, too. The ice in the creek was much thicker to jam up and make spring floods. Do you know where Second Avenue and the creek is over by those store?

LAPIKAS: Yes.

LANG: Well, there was a little house on the other side of the

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LANG: Let's see, I went to mostly Protestant churches, John, because Jim Merril and the fellows that went were either over to the Richards Street Methodist, the Presbyterian there on Richards Street, the Universalist downtown, see. The fellows I'd go with, I'd go with them not because my folks went to this church or that church but the fellows you bum around with. And I was master of a Masonic Lodge in 1925.

LAPIKAS: That Universalist Church is pretty old downtown then, right?

LANG: Yes, it's downtown next to where the old telephone building was.

MRS. LANG: I remember the Ottawa Street Methodist Church.

LAPIKAS: The Richard Street Church was there?

LANG: Yes, I went to the Richards Street Methodist but the Ottawa Street downtown . . .

MRS. LANG: When did you become a Mason?

LANG: In 1915 when I was 21. 1915 from then on.

LAPIKAS: From then on, wow. Are any of your relations still in town? You said you had six brothers and a sister.

LANG: I have nephews and nieces.

MRS. LANG: He's the only living one of his family, though. His nephew was Judge Lang, the one that retired and went to

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MRS. LANG: He's the only living one of his family, though. His nephew was Judge Lang, the one that retired and went to

Sun City--Judge Lang. And he has a nephew that's a dentist, Chuck Lang.

LAPIKAS: Any fairs or circuses in town that you can remember that ever came through when you were younger maybe?

LANG: Sure, I remember Ringling Brothers over across in what they used to call the fairgrounds--now Brooklyn across the bridge on Second Avenue and Fourth Avenue. The streetcar used to run up to Second and Rowell--back and forth. That used to be one of the streetcar lines. Well, they had the circuses over there. A parade would start from there and I can remember the parades would come down Second Avenue and down into town--horse pulled parades then. That's about all the circus I can remember. Lately they have them on the west side.

MRS. LANG: Ringling Brothers, that was the main one years ago and still is.

LAPIKAS: How about boundaries? What did Joliet consist of that you can remember? How far did it go say west, south?

LANG: I can remember when (where Hank lives) . . .

MRS. LANG: On John Street? Raynor Avenue?

LANG: Raynor Avenue was the west boundary. And Rowell Avenue up on the east side there. South would be Richards Street School and around in there. North you went up the mill about where the tracks there. Do you live with your folks up there?

LAPIKAS: I lived on the northeast side.

LANG: Liberty Street and that?

LAPIKAS: Further on down than that.

LANG: You lived around Kerr's . . . they lived on where the tracks . . .

LAPIKAS: Cleveland.

LANG: Yes, they lived on Cleveland. Bob Kerr and there were a bunch of Kerrs. He used to work at the penitentiary and up around there. That was the boundary line north, I think, around there, wasn't it?

LAPIKAS: Probably was, by the "J" tracks. You were in banking as an officer, right? With Peoples?

LANG: Yes, I was president of Peoples Savings and Loan--was. I'm not now.

LAPIKAS: You retired?

LANG: Yes.

LAPIKAS: How's the banking business changed?

LANG: I don't know. It's been safer since the moratorium when they closed (LAUGHTER).

LAPIKAS: I imagine people have money now that they're saving more of it now than I think they would before.

LANG: Yes. Of course, banks closed and the failure hit a lot of them because all our money was in it. Nowadays they don't lose it--or haven't.

LAPIKAS: Inflation is quite a thing. You've probably seen that.

LANG: Oh, gee, clothing, food. The prices are much higher, but wages are higher, too. You get more.

LAPIKAS: I guess it evens out in the long run more or less.

LANG: Oh, yes.

LAPIKAS: Mr. Lang, could you maybe give us your general impression of Joliet and how it's changed in the years.

LANG: Well, I think Joliet's grown into a bigger city. I can remember as a boy walking to school, walking to high school, walking to what we called manual training from the Richards Street School to Central School. Nowadays they're bussed. I can remember graduation times weren't the crowds at the high school that there is now when they graduate. It's grown.

LAPIKAS: Bigger and faster?

LANG: Bigger and faster, yes. Life moves faster nowadays. There's no question about it.

LAPIKAS: Does 80 years seem as quick as, you know, people say 80 years old is a long time. But time goes fast for 80, too, right?

LANG: You better go as fast as they days are rolling by.

(LAUGHTER) I consider myself lucky, John, that I can drive an auto. I don't worry about it. We drive carefully.

MRS. LANG: Good health.

LANG: Yes, good health. Ogda and I will take trips and she drives in the morning and I drive in the afternoon. We get quite a long ways, but we don't drive too far, see, that way.

MRS. LANG: Why you've been blessed with a lot of good things in your life, haven't you?

LANG: Yes.

LAPIKAS: Thanks very much, Mr. Lang.

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ORDER FOR PHOTOCOPIES
CONCERNING VETERAN

(See reverse for explanation)

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE

RECEIPT NO.

54399

DATE

6-4-68

SEARCHER

FILE DESIGNATION

WAS
John C. Lang
Xc 2688768

COPY OF RECORD OF MARRIAGE.

Date of License

Nov. 18" 1874

Number of License

5884

Name of Groom

John C. Lang

Name of Bride

Emily C. Webster

When Married

Nov. 18" 1874

By Whom Certified

John W. Caldwell, Clergyman

When Returned

Nov. 19" 1874

STATE OF ILLINOIS, } SS.
WILL COUNTY, }

Edwin L. Young

I, ~~ALFRED E. MOTTINGER~~, County Clerk of said County, do
hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the return
of Marriage as the same appears of record in my office.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have set my hand and affixed
my Official Seal, this 16th day of

December A. D. 1914

Edwin L. Young
County Clerk.

#6

No. 760132

WAR DEPARTMENT,

RECORD AND PENSION DIVISION.

Respectfully returned to the Commissioner

of Pensions.

John L. Sang
Co. 100, Reg't de. Mass.

was enrolled Aug. 1, 1862

and was with Co. 100, June 12, 1865,

Write nothing to the left of this line.

From July 29, 1864, to Oct. 31, 1864
he held the rank of private.and during that period the rolls show him
present except as follows: Aug. 31/64

absent wounded in action

near Atlanta, Ga. July 27/64

and sent to Hosp. After wounds

were healed before Atlanta

Ga. July 27/64 and sent to Hosp.

at Massachusetts. He is

by Sept. 8/64. He was in

action June 22/64 at Newmarket
Md. and July 27/64 before
Atlanta, Ga.

The medical records show him treated as

follows of Co. 100 de. Mass.

July 26 to Aug. 25, 1864

L. A. W. fac. returned

to duty; as John - Sang

Sang. Co. 100 de. Mass.

July 21 to 23, 1864

Discharged Atlanta, return

ed to duty.

Nothing additional found

By authority of the Secretary of War:

J. C. Smith

Captain and Asst Surgeon, U. S. Army.

Per m.

Date OCT 13 1890

(COMMISSIONER OF PENSIONS.)

War Department,

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,

Washington, D. C., Oct 12, 1890

Respectfully returned to Commissioner of Prisons

John B. Lang was enlisted on the 12^d day of
July, 1867 at Chicago Ill., and was
assigned to Comp^y "K" 32^d Regiment of U.S. Inf.

The muster roll of Company
"D" 21st Inf - to which company
"K" 32 Inf - was transferred by
Consolidation. ^{July & Aug '69} Reports him as

Discharged Aug 30 '69 at Camp Bowie D.T. by
reason of being a Supernumerary
Non Comm'd Officer - at date of
Consolidation.

Not reported sick on any roll
during enlistment.

J. L. Keltner
Adjutant General.
By J. L. Keltner

Joliet, Ill., December 16, 1914

I, HENRY W. ODENTHAL, Clerk of the City of Joliet, Illinois, and
keeper of the Records and Seal of said City, do hereby certify that the
attached is a true and correct copy of the certificate of death of one
John C. Lang, as filed in my office on the tenth
day of December A. D. 1914, for the uses and purposes
therein set forth.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto subscribed my name and caused
the Corporate Seal of said City of Joliet, Illinois, to be affixed this
16th. day of December, A. D. 1914

Henry W. Odenthal
City Clerk.

THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE REGIMENT



—of Seuth Battalion I. N. G.—

To all who shall see these Presents, Greeting:

Know Ye, That reposing special trust and confidence in the patriotism, valor, fidelity and abilities of John C. Lang—
I do hereby appoint him Cover Sergeant in Company B—of the Seuth Battalion Regiment of Illinois National
Guard—in the service of the State of Illinois, to rank as such from the 15th day of August—one thousand eight hundred and
Nineteen—He is therefore carefully and diligently to discharge the duty of Cover Sergeant by doing and performing all manner
of things thereunto belonging. And I do strictly charge and require all Non-Commissioned Officers and Soldiers under his command to be obedient
to his orders as Cover Sergeant—And he is to observe and follow such orders and directions from time to time as he shall receive
from me, or the future Commanding Officer of the Regiment, or other Superior Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers set over him, according to the
rules and regulations which govern the Armies of the United States. This Warrant to continue in force during the pleasure of the Commanding Offi-
cer of the Regiment for the time being.

Given under my hand at the Head Quarters of the Regiment, at Battalion, at Dwight, Illinois, this
Fifth day of September—in the Year of Our Lord one thousand eight hundred and Nineteen—

By the Commanding Officer:

Wm. B. Ditchman
7th Lieutenant

A. G. O. No. 103.

J. B. Parsons
Lieutenant Colonel

Battalion
Commanding the Regiment

Adjutant of the Regiment
Battalion

RETURN TO

J. MERRIAM,

3-402.

U. S. Pension Agent

Certificate No. 517439

Name, John C. Lang

CHICAGO, ILL.
Department of the Interior,

BUREAU OF PENSIONS,

Washington, D. C., January 15, 1898.

SIR:

In forwarding to the pension agent the executed voucher for your next quarterly payment please favor me by returning this circular to him with replies to the questions enumerated below.

Very respectfully,

W. H. Brandt,

Commissioner of Pensions.

First. Are you married? If so, please state your wife's full name and her maiden name.

Answer. Emily C. Lang nee Emily C. Webster

Second. When, where, and by whom were you married?

Answer. Nov. 18th, 1874, Joliet, Ill., Rev John W. Caldwell

Third. What record of marriage exists?

Answer. Marriage Record "E" in office of Hon. A. B. Clark, Joliet, Ill.

Fourth. Were you previously married? If so, please state the name of your former wife and the date and place of her death or divorce.

Answer. No

Fifth. Have you any children living? If so, please state their names and the dates of their birth.

Answer. Eight - Francis Murray, aged 23 years; Horace Webster, aged 21 years; Joseph Clement, aged 18 years 8 mos, a soldier in Co. B. 3rd Regt Ill. Infy.; Charles L. aged 17 yrs; next birthday; Florence, aged 14 yrs next birthday; Howard Payne, 11 years next birthday; Eugene, 8 "

Date of reply, July 5th, 1898

John C. Lang

5301b750ml-98

Write this in office;
Can't give date of birth
unless I go home and look
into the record.

RETURN TO

J. MERRIAM,

3-402.

U. S. Pension Agent.

Certificate No.

517439

Name,

John C. Lang

Department of the Interior,

BUREAU OF PENSIONS,

Washington, D. C., January 15, 1898.

SIR:

In forwarding to the pension agent the executed voucher for your next quarterly payment please favor me by returning this circular to him with replies to the questions enumerated below.

Very respectfully,

H. C. Evans

Commissioner of Pensions.

First. Are you married? If so, please state your wife's full name and her maiden name.

Answer. Emily C. Lang nee Emily C. Webster

Second. When, where, and by whom were you married?

Answer. Nov. 18th, 1874, Joliet, Ills., Rev John M. Caldwell

Third. What record of marriage exists?

Answer. Marriage Record "E," in office of Louis A. Clark, Joliet, Ills.

Fourth. Were you previously married? If so, please state the name of your former wife and the date and place of her death or divorce.

Answer. No

Fifth. Have you any children living? If so, please state their names and the dates of their birth.

Answer. Eight - Francis Murray, aged 23 years; Horace Webster, aged 21 years; Joseph Clement, aged 18 years 8 mos., a soldier in Co. B. 3rd Regt Ills. Infy.; Charles L. aged 17 yrs; next birthday; Florence, aged 14 yrs next birthday; Howard Payne, 11 years next birthday; Eugene, 5 " " Donald, 3 " "

Date of reply,

July 5th, 1898

0-3

John C. Lang
(Signature.)

8301b750m1-98

Write this in office.
Can't give date of birth
unless I go home and look

CERTIFICATE AND RECORD OF DEATH

REGISTERED No.

OF

COUNTY.

1. FULL NAME John C. Lang
 2. (a) SEX male (b) COLOR white (c) SINGLE Married
 3. (a) BIRTHPLACE Frankfort, Ills. (b) DATE OF BIRTH Nov 24, 1844
 4. AGE 70 YEARS MONTHS DAYS (If less than one day old)
 5. DIED ON THE 7th DAY OF December 1914 AT ABOUT 11:45 M. P. M.
 6. LAST OCCUPATION (a) Probate Clerk (b) (c) (Industry or Business)
 FROM THE YEAR (c) TO THE YEAR (Date) (Date)
 7. FORMER OCCUPATION (a) (b) (c) (Date) (Date)
 8. PLACE OF DEATH 400 Mississippi Ave COUNTY OF Will
 (Township, Village or City, if in City, Number of Street and Ward)
 14. PLACE OF BURIAL Oakwood, Joliet 15. UNDERTAKER Geo. N. Chamberlin & Son LICENSE No. 52
 DATE OF BURIAL Dec. 10, 1914 HOUR 7:30 P. M. ADDRESS Joliet, Illinois

9. How Long IN STATE always
 10. How Long IN U. S. IF FOREIGN BORN 2
 11. (a) NAME OF FATHER Thos. J. Lang
 (b) BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER New Hampshire (State or Country)
 12. (a) MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER Elsey George
 (b) BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER New Hampshire (State or Country)

The foregoing stated personal particulars are true to the best of my knowledge and belief:

13. INFORMANT Joseph C. Lang
 ADDRESS Joliet, Illinois

MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF CAUSE OF DEATH

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT I ATTENDED DECEASED FROM over one year TO 1914 THAT I LAST SAW him
 ALIVE ON THE 4th DAY OF Dec. 1914 THAT DEATH OCCURRED, ON DATE STATED ABOVE, AT ABOUT noon O'CLOCK
 M., AND THAT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF THE CAUSE OF his DEATH WAS AS HEREUNDER WRITTEN
 (IF UNDER ONE YEAR OLD, STATE HOW FED)

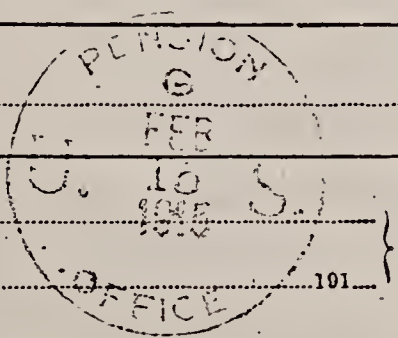
(a) CAUSE OF DEATH	<u>Dilation of Heart</u>	Duration in Years, Months, Days or Hours
(b) CONTRIBUTORY (SECONDARY)	<u>Heart failure (sudden)</u>	<u>1 year</u>
		<u>few moments</u>

WITNESS MY HAND THIS

DAY OF Dec. 1914

(SIGNATURE) O. C. Davis M. D.

ADDRESS Joliet, Ills.



WRITE PLAINLY WITH BLACK UNFADING INK - THIS IS A PERMANENT RECORD.

DECLARATION FOR PENSION.

THE PENSION CERTIFICATE SHOULD NOT BE FORWARDED WITH THE APPLICATION.

State of Illinois
County of Will } ss.

On this 16th day of February, A. D. one thousand nine hundred and seven, personally appeared before me, a clerk of County Court within and for the county and State aforesaid, John B. Lang, who, being duly sworn according to law, declares that he is 62 years of age, and a resident of Joliet county of Will State of Illinois; and that he is the identical person who was ENROLLED at Plainfield, Will County, Ill. under the name of John B. Lang, on the 1st day of August, 1862, as a Private, in Company B, 100th Regt Illinois Vol. Inftry (Here state rank, and company and regiment in the Army, or vessels if in the Navy.)

in the service of the United States, in the Civil war, and was HONORABLY DISCHARGED at Nashville, Tenn. on the 12th day of June, 1865. That he also served (Here give a complete statement of all other services, if any.)

That he was not employed in the military or naval service of the United States otherwise than as stated above. That his personal description at enlistment was as follows: Height, Five feet Six inches; complexion, Dark; color of eyes, Dark; color of hair, Dark; that his occupation was Farmer; that he was born March 24th, 1844, at Plainfield Illinois.

That his several places of residence since leaving the service have been as follows: Plainfield, Ill., until June or July 1867, Arizona until July, 1879;
Joliet, Ill. since July, 1879. (State date of each change, as nearly as possible.)

That he is a pensioner. That he has heretofore applied for pension Certificate No. 517439 (If a pensioner, the certificate number only need be given. If not, give the number of the former application, if one was made.)

That he makes this declaration for the purpose of being placed on the pension roll of the United States under the provisions of the act of February 6, 1907.

That his post-office address is Joliet, county of Will State of Illinois.

Attest: (1) Benjamin H. King
(2) William H. Nevins

John B. Lang
(Claimant's signature in full.)

Also personally appeared Benjamin H. King, residing in Joliet, Illinois, and William H. Nevins, residing in Joliet, Illinois persons whom I certify to be respectable and entitled to credit, and who being by me duly sworn, say that they were present and saw John B. Lang, the claimant, sign his name (or make his mark) to the foregoing declaration; that they have every reason to believe, from the appearance of the claimant and their acquaintance with him of 35 years and 22 years, respectively, that he is the identical person he represents himself to be, and that they have no interest in the prosecution of this claim.

Benjamin H. King
William H. Nevins
(Signatures of witnesses.)

SUBSCRIBED and sworn to before me this 16th day of February, A. D. 1907, and I hereby certify that the contents of the above declaration, etc., were fully made known and explained to the applicant and witnesses before swearing, including the words _____, erased, and the words _____, added; and that I have no interest, direct or indirect, in the prosecution of this claim.

[L. S.]

Alfred E. Nottingham
(Signature.)



DECLARATION FOR WIDOW'S PENSION.

STATE OF Illinois
COUNTY OF Will ss:

On this 16 day of December, A. D. one thousand nine hundred and 14
personally appeared before me, a Notary Public
and for the County and State aforesaid, Emily Catherine Lang aged 61
years, a resident of Forest, County of Will State of Illinois,
who, being duly sworn according to law, makes the following declaration in order to
obtain pension under the provisions of the ACT OF CONGRESS APPROVED April 19, 1908.

That she is the widow of John H. Lang, who was
Enrolled under the name of John H. Lang, at
Forest, Ill. on the 12th day of August, 1862
as a Private in Company B 100th Ill. Inf.
(Here state rank, and company and regiment in the Army, or vessels if in the Navy.)
honorably discharged June 12, 1862, having served ninety days or more during the late civil war.

That he also served as First Sergeant of Company D of the 3rd Regiment of Mounted Rifles
from July 12-1867 to May 12-1869
(Here give a complete statement of all other services, if any.)

That he was not in the military or naval service of the United States otherwise than as stated above.
That she was married under the name of Emily Catherine Webster
to said soldier at Forest, Ill. on the 1st day
of March, 1874, by Rev. J. W. Field;
that there was no legal barrier to the marriage; that she had not been previously married; that the soldier had not
been previously married,
(If there was a prior marriage of either, the date and place of death or divorce of former consort or consorts should be stated.)

and that neither she nor said soldier married otherwise than as above stated.
That the said soldier died Dec 7th, 1914, at Forest, Illinois
that she was not divorced from him, and that she was not remarried since his death.

That the said soldier left the following-named children who are now living and under sixteen years of age, to wit:
(If the soldier left no children, the claimant should so state.)
_____, born _____, I _____, at _____
_____, born _____, I _____, at _____
_____, born _____, I _____, at _____
_____, born _____, I _____, at _____
_____, born _____, I _____, at _____
_____, born _____, I _____, at _____

That she has not heretofore applied for pension.
(If prior application has been made, the number thereof, the service on which

it was based, and the name of the soldier should be stated.)
That her post-office address is 400 Mississippi av Forest County of Will
State of Illinois

Attest: (1) Evan W. Willard
(2) Lucy A. Morrison Emily Catherine Lang
(Claimant's signature in full.)

Also personally appeared Evan W. Willard, residing in
Forest, Ill., and Lucy A. Morrison, residing in
Forest, Ill., persons whom I certify to be respectable and entitled to credit, and who, be-
by me duly sworn, say they were present and saw Emily Catherine Lang, the
claimant, sign her name (or make her mark) to the foregoing declaration; that they have every reason to believe, from the
appearance of said claimant and their acquaintance with her of 28 years and 11 years, respectively, that she is
the identical person she represents herself to be, and that they have no interest in the prosecution of this claim.

Evan W. Willard
Lucy A. Morrison
(Signatures of witnesses.)

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 16th day of December, A. D. 1914
and I hereby certify that the contents of the above declaration, etc., were fully made known and explained
to the applicant and witnesses before swearing, including the words _____

Declaration accepted as _____, erased, and the words
a claim under the act of _____, added; and that I have no
April 19, 1908, interest, direct or indirect, in the prosecution of this claim.

Samuel W. King
(Signature.)

Vast Quarry Industry Gave Joliet Name 'Stone City'

By ELMER F. OTT
Herald-News Writer

It was once estimated that there was enough stone underneath the Joliet area to build a "Chinese Wall" around the entire state.

From the vast supply of the finest of building stone and flag stone, several buildings in Joliet were constructed and many feet of sidewalk were laid which resulted in the city being aptly named "Stone City."

An early geological survey in Illinois disclosed that from 12 to 15 feet of dimension stone was available for quarrying. The stone was described as being a very compact, fine-grained, clinking, magnesian limestone.

Historians say that they have not been able to accurately determine who started the quarrying as a regular business, but it is assumed that M. H. Demmond must have been the first quarryman, because he built the first stone house in Joliet in 1835. It is apparent that he did not extend the business beyond his own immediate wants.

The stone business continued on the increase until it reached vast proportions and the quarries in Joliet in ordinary times employed more than 500 men in the pits. The strata of stone not only was in Joliet but extended as far north as Lemont.

W. A. Steel and Col. L. P. Sanger operated one of the larger quarries in Joliet and employed a number of men. They shipped large quantities of stone to almost every part of the country and trade in stone was extensive in all parts of the state. They shipped some 30,000 car loads to the government works at Rock Island. Custom houses at Des Moines, Ia., and Madison, Wis., and the capitol building at Lansing, Mich., were built principally from stone coming from the Steel and Sanger quarry.

Steel, a lawyer of some reputation in Illinois and Pennsylvania, also furnished stone for about 60 courthouses and jails in Illinois, Indiana and Michigan, for the railroad bridge over the Mississippi River at Dubuque and the U.S. Marine Hospital at Chicago as well as a portion of the capitol building at Springfield. Steel was instrumental in starting the first public library in Joliet in 1867. He was elected mayor of Joliet in 1869, serving for three consecutive terms.

In July 1865 Steel, and his father-in-law, Col. Lorenzo P. Sanger, opened quarries north of and adjacent to Joliet under the name of Sanger and Steel. The company quarried the best limestone to be found in America, it is said.

Col. Sanger lived a colorful life as a contractor and builder, soldier and quarryman. At the age of about 20 years, he took a contract to build a lock near Livermore, Pa., and became known as the boy contractor. In 1821, while digging a salt well at Freeport, Pa., he struck oil, which was at this time considered almost a worthless item.

From Freeport, he went to the Beaver Canal and built a lock and dam. He later took on large contracts in the building of the Indiana canal. In 1836, he became associated with two other men in the rock excavation of the I. and M. Canal above Lockport. He joined a company in 1843 to form a stage line between Chicago and Galena. While at Galena, he was

elected a state senator. In 1857, the State of Illinois let to Sanger and Samuel Casey a contract to build the Collins Street Prison. In the year that followed, the state leased to them convict labor.

The nation being in the War of Rebellion, President Lincoln wrote to Governor Yates asking him to send Sanger a commission of colonel and requested he join the army in Tennessee and Kentucky for staff duty. Col. Sanger left his business and joined the army, remaining in the service until his health had almost completely failed.

It was on his return from the army, that he entered the quarrying business with Steel, who purchased Sanger's interest on March 1, 1871. In 1865, the Sanger and Steel Company took the contract to deepen 21 rock sections of the I. and M. Canal. This was to remove solid limestone 60 feet wide and 10 feet deep to take away permanently the lift-lock at Chicago and Jack's Lock near Lockport.

One of the oldest quarries was operated by James Bruce and Company. Having been in business for a longer time, the company commanded a large trade in stone and shipped extensively to all sections of the country. The quarry was located east of the Collins Street Prison.

The Joliet Stone Company's quarries were among the largest and best in the operation. They were organized in 1877 with G. H. Munroe as president, G. M. Campbell secretary and treasurer and D. C. Hays as superintendent. The company furnished a superior grade of limestone and in the bottom layers of the quarry was found cement stone. The quarry employed from 25 to 100 men and had a modern and complete system of steam machinery for sawing and rubbing stone.

The Werners — Charles, William and Adam — all operated separate quarries, but Charles did the most business in stone being also a stone mason. He built the county jail and sheriff's house, Joliet Union Schoolhouse and St.

Mary's Catholic Church.

William Davidson and Brother opened their quarries in 1845 and shipped large quantities of stone. Their quarries were located on the Rock Island Railroad and the canal, which offered them excellent facilities for shipping. The quarry was located a mile southwest of Joliet.

In 1872, the Davidson quarries, known as the Joliet Pioneer Stone Company, furnished \$99,000 worth of stone flagging for Chicago streets and employed 325 men. The company also furnished all the stone for the building of the steel company at South Chicago. In 1867, he and W. A. Strong bought the Swalm Quarry. This company was the first to make shipments of stone on the I. and M. Canal. Later, they bought the Wilson Quarry and Davidson then

bought his partner's interest. In 1869, he sold a quarter interest in the quarry to his brother, Joseph, and in 1882 the company was incorporated. Both of the Davidsons were experienced English quarrymen.

Bannon and Kronmeyer, both owned and operated quarries and had a large trade both in this country and abroad. The Bannon Quarry was located on the west side of the river and Kronmeyer's Quarry on the canal just south of the Collins Street Prison.

The United States Government had subjected the Joliet stone to new and critical tests, comparing it with stone from other important quarries in the country. Both the War and Treasury Departments for many years had recognized the Joliet stone for its superiority and drew on Joliet quar-

ries for immense quantities for the building of public buildings throughout the country.

The Joliet Prison on Collins Street is constructed mostly of the stone. The walls are six feet thick and 25 feet in height. Most of the stone was quarried in the immediate vicinity of the prison. Historians say the prison was built on a strata of limestone of such a depth as to render all tunneling out impossible.

Geological surveys show a strata of an average of 22 feet of limestone, 30 feet of soap and slate stone and 12 feet of sandstone.

In many areas of the country still stand buildings, some over a century old, which are actual testimony to the enduring resistance to the elements of Joliet limestone.



WILLIAM DAVIDSON QUARRY IN JOLIET

